How to safeguard your child's privacy on popular apps and games

The internet and social media allow children and young people to easily find and engage in adult worlds and while most popular platforms state account holders must be over 13 years of age, many kids below this age already regularly engage with social media.

If your child has a social media account or is on a gaming platform help them to stay safe by setting profiles to private and limiting the information they share online.

Kids often believe people who say they know a mutual acquaintance at their school. Setting accounts to 'private' controls who sees your child's content and who can contact them.

This guide provides practical tips on how to:

- Set accounts to private
- Keep your location private
- Block or remove followers
- How to report inappropriate contact
- If you need more help

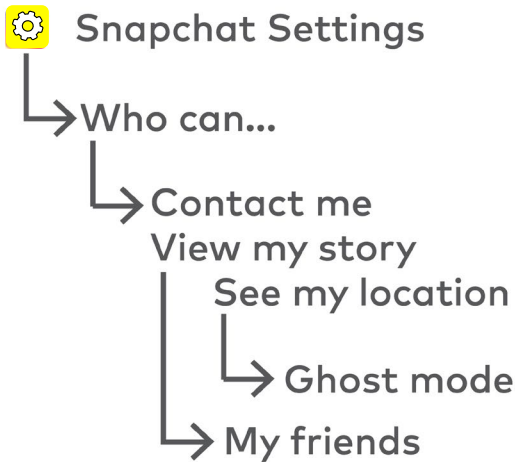## How to start the conversation

One of the ways to introduce this concept to your child is to ask them questions such as:

- "Sometimes adults pretend to be people they're not and will contact you asking to be your friend, get you to send them photos, or even send photos of themselves. This can be scary or upsetting and it's good to make sure that these people can't contact you. Let's change your profile to private so only people you know can contact you."

- "Apps and games have age limits, a bit like the way movies have ratings. It's so that you don't see things that aren't meant for you or that are dangerous or upsetting. Let's check the age restrictions on this together."
- "If your profile is public, anyone can look at your posts, photos, profile information, and interact with you. Let's change your profile to private so only people you know can see your information."

Account Privacy Tips:

- Set your profile to "Private" and check location settings
- Don't use the same password and email address on all your apps and games
- Make sure your password has nothing to do with your name, birthday or address

- Change your passwords regularly
- Use at least 10 characters, although the longer the better
- Don't keep passwords on your phone or computer
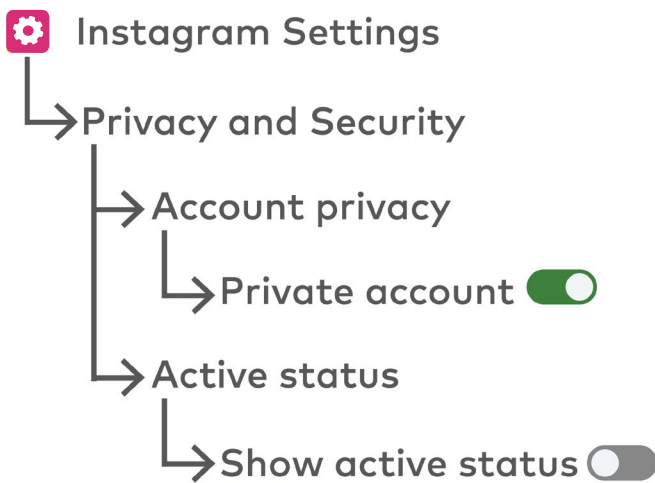- Use multi-factor authentication if possible

Exploring Privacy Settings on Popular Apps

⚙ Snapchat Settings

↳ **Who can...**

   ↳ **Contact me**
     View my story
      See my location

       ↳ **Ghost mode**

    ↳ **My friends**

Block or remove followers ⟶

In the 'Who can...' section of your profile settings on Snapchat you control who can see your content and who can contact you directly. Choosing 'My friends' for all of these options does not give strangers the opportunity to interact with you.

If you enable 'ghost mode' your location will be kept private and your bitmoji will not appear on the Snapmap.

You can block or remove people by going to their profile.

⚙ Instagram Settings

↳ **Privacy and Security**

   ↳ **Account privacy**

     ↳ **Private account** 🟢

   ↳ **Active status**

     ↳ **Show active status** ⚪

Block or remove followers ⟶

Setting your account to private means that only your approved followers have access to your information, posts, comments and other followers.

You can control your privacy and visibility settings in the 'Privacy and Security' menu on Instagram.

You can block or unfollow people by going to their profile.

Exploring Privacy Settings on Popular Apps

⚙️ **TikTok Settings**

↳ **Privacy and Security**

↳ **Private account** 🟢

↳ **Allow others to find me** ⚫

When you create an account on Tik Tok it is automatically made public so it is your responsibility to engage all safety settings on your profile.

To ensure that you are uncontactable by strangers and/or predators, follow these steps:

⚙️ **Fortnite Privacy**

↳ **Open 'friends' list**

↳ **Social settings menu**

↳ **Auto decline friend requests**

There have been reports of hackers using Fortnite accounts to steal players' information and people pretending to be young using the game as a way to connect with underage players.

You can change your privacy settings on the device you are playing on to protect your information and can control who can contact you in the game itself.
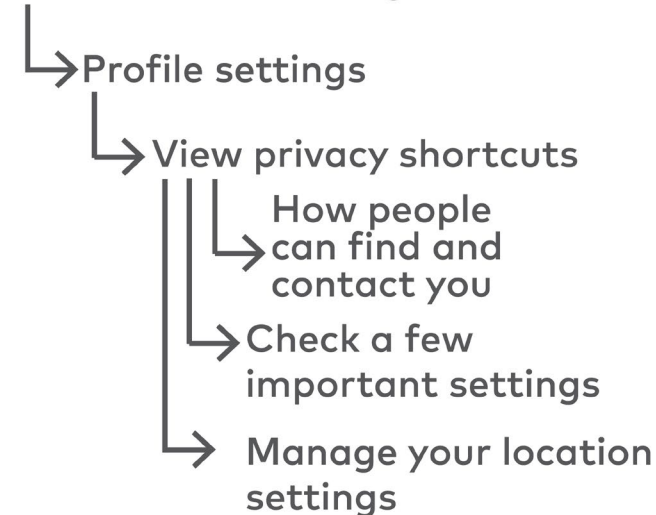
Xbox and Playstation
Find your account or gamer tag and update your privacy settings

Exploring Privacy Settings on Popular Apps

⚙ Facebook Settings
→ **Profile settings**
→ **View privacy shortcuts**
How people can find and contact you
Check a few important settings
Manage your location settings
Block or unfollow →

Some of your information is always public, such as your name and profile picture but you can control which other information is made public. You can control who sees what information in your profile and privacy settings.

You can control which apps have access to your location in your phone's settings.

You can review which other apps or websites you've used Facebook to log into. These websites can then use your information.

You can block or remove people by going to their profile.

How to report inappropriate content

The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's national independent regulator for online safety.
The Office of the eSafety Commissioner has developed an **eSafety Guide** with reporting links and information for a range of social media services, games, apps and sites.
Reporting of inappropriate images, content, and cyberbullying can also be made directly to **https://www.esafety.gov.au/report**

What to do if you need more help

If your child ever sees or receives anything online that makes them uncomfortable, they should feel supported in discussing it with you or their friends or teachers. Alternatively, they can call Kids Helpline, Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds.
1800 55 1800 kidshelpline.com.au

About Optus Digital Thumbprint

Optus Digital Thumbprint is a free and award-winning educational program that supports young people and families to be safe, responsible and positive online.

Since 2013, we've delivered workshops and developed digital tools that have educated more than 320,000 primary and secondary school students across Australia.

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